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**EOEA JOINS WITH HOPKINTON OFFICIALS TO MARK COMPLETION OF
RESTORATION WORK AT WHITEHALL RESERVOIR DAM**

In a ribbon-cutting ceremony today, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) celebrated the completion of restoration and rehabilitation work on the Whitehall Reservoir Dam in Hopkinton. In attendance were State Representative Paul Loscocco, State Senator Karen Spilka, and Hopkinton town officials, along with representatives from DCR.

The dam had developed structural problems—primarily sinkholes—that made rehabilitation necessary. The upstream slope was reconfigured to prevent erosion, and a new concrete box culvert spillway was constructed with a provision to conduct drawdown (to lower the water level of the lake seasonally, if necessary, to help control the weed problem in the reservoir). Additionally, the project made the public road safer and increased accessibility for recreational use. An improvement not part of the initial plans was the preservation of the dam's historic gatehouse.

“Originally, DCR only had the funding for the dam repair and reconstruction, and not the preservation of the gatehouse,” said Environmental Affairs Secretary Stephen R. Pritchard. “The alternative was to demolish it and create a pedestrian walkway. Community opinion was instrumental in helping to shift our thinking on this—never let it be said that we don’t recognize a good idea when we hear it. We heard it.”

Funding for the gatehouse restoration was secured as a result of efforts by Rep. Paul Loscocco. It was agreed that the town of Hopkinton would maintain the roadway and the Gatehouse and DCR will maintain the upstream dam and both spillways as well as the grounds of the Whitehall State Park.

“Today we celebrate completion of the dam’s full rehabilitation,” said DCR Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington. “Today’s event is a tribute to the dedication and commitment of many parties, and is an excellent example of state and municipal partnership to reach a common goal.”

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